

Approved

Rockville Environment Commission Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, February 4, 2016

Diamondback Terrapin, City Hall,
111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland

Attendance

Commissioners Present: John Becker, Steve Cardon, Amanda Matheny, Clark Reed, Lea Rosenbohm, Steve Sprague, and Helen Triolo.

Commissioners Absent: Alicia Hosmer

City Staff: Erica Shingara (Environmental Management)

Guests: None

Meeting Commencement and Introductions

The meeting convened at 7:01 pm by Chair Reed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Sprague moved and Commissioner Becker seconded a motion to approve the January 9, 2016 meeting minutes and retreat notes. The motion passed 5-0-1 (Commissioner Triolo abstained due to absence and Commissioner Rosenbohm was absent for the vote).

Meeting Agenda Review and Revision

There were no additions or revisions to the agenda.

Prospective Candidates

The interview of the third prospective candidate was deferred due to absence.

Comprehensive Master Plan Update

Clark Larson, Planner with Rockville's Community Planning and Development Services, provided an overview the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) update process and presented the Rockville 2040 Environment Background Report. Rockville 2040 is the multi-year project, begun in 2015, to update the CMP to reflect new circumstances and Rockville's vision for its future. The Environment Background Report (available at www.rockvillemd.gov/index.aspx?NID=1772) is a precursor to help inform the community conversation as the Master Plan is updated to reflect the city's vision and goals over the next 25 years. The Report presents a description of the existing conditions of natural resources, environmental issues and certain environmental sustainability topics within the municipal boundary of the Rockville, as well as those that cross geographical and jurisdictional boundaries. Report topics include the following:

- Watersheds and Water Quality
- Floodplains and Dams
- Soils and Steep Slopes
- Forests and Tree Canopy
- Wildlife Habitat
- Environmental Hazards
- Air Quality
- Climate Change and Adaptation
- Energy
- Green Buildings

The CMP update will include a series of citywide public forums in the spring, whose purpose is for participants to help develop a first draft of goals and objectives for key topics such as land use, transportation, environment, economy, housing and historic preservation. As the Commission is designated to recommend policies and programs to the Mayor and Council and City staff relating to the environment and sustainability, the Commission's involvement in the environmental issues and goals of the Master Plan update is critical as the update process continues.

- Information on how to participate in upcoming public forums will be announced on the Comprehensive Master Plan webpage: <http://rockvillemd.gov/index.aspx?nid=203>
- Interactive City maps (tree canopy comparison, parks and facilities, planning areas, etc.) are available at: <http://maps.rockvillemd.gov/gallery/>
- **Action Item:** The Commission indicated that it is important to participate in the spring CMP public forums and can also submit any comments or questions on the CMP to CPDS. Commissioner Becker volunteered the Sustainability Committee to continue to follow the CMP update process and organize representation in the upcoming forums.

Committee Reports

- **Energy** - Chair Reed circulated a white paper on the Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Act of 2016. A house and/or senate bill was not released yet to review. The proposed act increases the renewal portfolio standard (RPS) from 20% by 2022 to 25% by 2020 and proposes a \$40 million clean energy fund to invest in clean energy jobs training and minority-and woman-owned business development.
 - Commissioner Becker moved and Commissioner Matheny seconded a motion for the Commission to support the concept of increasing Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard to 25% by 2020 and that the City evaluate the proposed legislation when it becomes available and consider supporting the bill(s) in Annapolis. The Commission discussed the potential program costs, the cost passed onto the customer, and the principle of subsidizing the market vs a market-driven approach. The motion passed (5-1).
- **Composting and Recycling** - Commissioner Rosenbohm reported that the Committee coordinated with the City to prohibit vendors from using Styrofoam during the Taste of Rockville at Hometown Holidays and will extend those rules to vendors at other events. The Committee also advocated for the use of compostables and provided a list of available items and prices. The Committee continues to track Montgomery County's composting plan and Commissioner Sprague, Commissioner Rosenbohm, and Mark Charles attended the County's Solid Waste Advisory meeting in February. The County discussed various composting options but did not identify likely alternatives or a timeframe. The Sierra Club requested to attend the next Committee meeting to discuss the proposed bottle bill.
- **Watershed Protection** - Commissioner Matheny reported that Stormwater Manager Heather Gewandter attended the last Committee meeting. The Committee discussed the City's stormwater and stream restoration Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The CIP is funded through the stormwater utility fee and provides a five years plan for various stream restoration and stormwater management retrofit projects. Additional information is available at: <http://rockvillemd.gov/index.aspx?NID=1090>. The Committee also discussed an upcoming green streets study to help fulfil anticipated NPDES requirements of treating 20 percent of untreated impervious surface in the City through small-scale SWM facility retrofit projects located within City owned right-of-way.

- ***Sustainability*** - Commissioner Becker reported that the Committee will review the wildlife habitat certification and Comprehensive Master Plan update process at their next meeting.

Environment Management Division Update

Erica Shingara reviewed upcoming events and projects:

- The City will be partnering with Montgomery County, WSSC and other agencies to host the H2O Summit on March 5th at the Rockville Senior Center. The public is invited to attend to learn about water quality and ways to get involved. Information is available at: <https://mygreenmontgomery.org/h2osummit>
- The City is planning a series of activities to celebrate Earth Month in April. Details will be included in the March and April Rockville Reports.
- The Welsh Park LED outdoor parking light retrofit project was completed. It was partially funded by a Maryland Smart Energy Community Grant. The City has applied for another MSEC grant to support HVAC and LED lighting upgrades at the Swim and Fitness Center and Lincoln Park.
- Environmental Management contacted the Rockville Chamber of Commerce to discuss an opportunity for Montgomery County's building energy benchmarking bill to apply in Rockville. The bill requires commercial buildings 50,000 square feet and greater to benchmark energy use and report data to Montgomery County for annual public disclosure.
- Staff is editing amendments to the Floodplain Ordinance to comply with new FEMA requirements. The amendments are currently being reviewed by MDE and FEMA. It is anticipated that this ordinance will be brought to the Commission for review in May.

New Business

- The Commission will identify potential nominations for Environmental Excellence Awards to be reviewed at the March meeting
 - **Action Item:** Commissioner Cardon volunteered to complete a nomination for the outstanding individual environmental stewardship
 - **Action Item:** Commissioner Becker volunteered to identify nomination(s) for green businesses.
 - **Action Item:** Commissioner Rosenbohm volunteered to research recycling leaders in the City.
- The Commission will discuss Hometown Holiday (HTH) preparations in March. The Commission will need to identify volunteers or a partner to staff the booth on Saturday and Sunday and electricity will not be available this year.
 - **Action Item** Commissioner Cardon volunteered to send out a survey for HTH giveaways.
- The Commission suggested reviewing Committee meeting needs and monthly vs ad-hoc opportunities.

Executive Session

In executive session, the Commissioners discussed the vacancy and chair. The Commission elected Commissioner Becker to serve a one year term as Chair.

Adjourn

The Commission adjourned by acclamation at 9:35 p.m.

Next Commission Meeting

The Commission will tentatively meeting on **Thursday, March 3, 2015 at 7:00 pm** in the **Diamondback Terrapin Conference Room at the Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue,** Rockville Maryland 20850-2321. The public is invited to attend.